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ABSTRACT

A study examined the relationship between the personality constructs of self-concept and communication apprehension and the use of self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches) as a potential self-concept enhancement strategy. The question of whether the constructs of self-concept and communication apprehension overlap was investigated for both theoretical and empirical support, and both constructs were, additionally, related to the intervening self-confrontation variable. Subjects were 168 college students in a public speaking class who completed a self-concept scale, a report of communication apprehension, and a video confrontation scale at the beginning of the semester (before participating in public speaking activities in class) and again at the end of the semester (after each had delivered four in-class speeches). Each student was shown the videotape of his or her speech performances after each presentation. Results indicated that future speech communication self-concept research might benefit from a reexamination of the construct under consideration. Although self-concept is normally viewed as a "state" variable, the results suggested that the construct might be resistant to change in the limited communciation course context. Communication apprehension, a dimension of self-concept, however, was found to be susceptible to change in this setting. Public speaking appeared to be the intervening variable that invoked the change, while self-confrontation appeared to inhibit the reduction of apprehension. (FL)

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Self-concept, Communication Apprehension, and Self-confrontation: A Relational Study

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Additional Data Analyses Reported in the Addendum Represent Part of a Current Revision of this Study Involving Collaboration Between Craig Newburger and Linda Brannon (McNeese State University)

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Abstract

Self-concept, Communication Apprehension,

and Self-confrontation:

A Relational Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the personality constructs of self-concept and communication apprehension and the use of self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches) as a potential self-concept enhancement strategy. The question of whether the constructs of self-concept and communication apprehension overlap each other was examined for both theoretical and empirical support, and both constructs were, additionally, related to the intervening self-confrontation variable. The results indicated that future speech communication self-concept research may benefit from a reexamination of the construct under consideration. Although self-concept is normally viewed as a "state" variable, the results suggested that the construct may be resistent to change in the limited communication course context. Communication apprehension, a dimension of self-concept, however, was found to be susceptible to change in this setting. Public speaking appeared to be the intervening variable that invoked the change, while self-confrontation appeared to inhibit the reduction of communication apprehension.

Increased attention is being paid to self-concept as an important educational variable (Marsh and Smith, 1982; Newburger, 1982a, 1982b; Wylie, 1979; Moran, Michael, and Dembo, 1978). The implicit assumption in speech communication self-concept research is that the improvement of student self-concept will lead to increased communicative effectiveness. Theoretical support for student self-concept modification in communication courses (SSCMCC) leading to increased communicative effectiveness is substantial.

First, the notion that speech instruction stimulates student self-concept modification, has support. The early views of Cooley (1902) and Sullivan (1947) depicted the self as a construct developing out of one's perception of the reactions of others to him/her, consisting of reflected appraisals learned in contact with other significant people. More recently, Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) stressed that a person's perception of himself or herself is influenced especially by reinforcement, evaluations by significant others, and one's attribution for one's own behavior. Considering the highly socially interactive atmosphere of most basic speech courses (i.e., speaker-audience interaction, group discussion, instructor or peer feedback), the basic communication classroom environment seems well suited for stimulating student self-concept modification. For student self-concept change to occur, however, as a result of experience in the basic communication course setting the self-concept must possess a dynamic quality. The literature supports this "dynamic self" view. Furr (1970) suggested that the perception of environmental

elements in new perspective tends to alter the self-concept (p.26). Purkey (1970), additionally, suggested that "because the self is developed as a process of experience, it is remarkably plastic, changeable, and possesses infinite capacity for growth and actualization" (p. 30).

Before speech communication educators can claim that speech instruction serves to stimulate individual communicative growth through self-concept enhancement, such enhancement must be shown to be related to communicative behavior. There is support that such a relationship exists. Kelly (1955), for example, suggested that "a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events" (p. 46). He suggested that "a person anticipates events by construing their replications" (p. 50). Speech students could potentially develop self-conceptions of communication abilities through anticipation and replication of the communication events common to basic speech courses (e.g., speeches, group discussion). Whether the resultant self-constructs that emerge through this event, anticipation, and the replication process have impact on student communication behavior is not altogether certain; but does have strong theoretical support.

The literature on "self" presents an emphatic link between self-concept and behavior. Lecky (1945), suggested, for example, that people behave in ways that are consistent with their self-views. Rogers (1951) believed behavior to be a function of the individual's "self" perceptions, and emphasized that the behavioral scientist should attempt to achieve an internal (self) rather than an external frame of

reference. Combs et al. (1971) suggested that self-concept is the most important single factor affecting behavior (p. 39). Finally, Felker (1974) suggested that self-concept determines how an individual will behave in a wide range of situations (p. 7).

There is a small base of research findings supporting the link between self-concept and communication behavior. Gilkinson and Knower (1941), for example, reported that good speakers have better social adjustment than have poorer speakers (p. 166). Bormann and Shapiro (1962) reported that a speaker's perceived confidence is a function of his self-image (p. 256). Ferullo's (1963) findings indicated that better speakers reveal a significantly higher degree of self-satisfaction, self-acceptance, independence, emotional control and personality integration than do poorer speakers (p. 85).

Despite the support that student self-concept modification is potentially stimulated through experience in a basic speech course and that such modification potentially increases student communicative effectiveness, SSCMCC research findings are contradictory. For example, Miyamoto, Crowell and Katcher (1956) found that self-conceptions reflect a fairly stable phenomenon, consequently, they argued that great changes should not be expected in this variable due to contact with any single academic course. Brooks and Platz (1968) found that some students' "self-concepts as communicators" improved, while other students' "self-concepts as communicators" were weakened as a result of contact with a basic speech course. Furr (1970) found that students' self-concepts were improved as a result of contact with a course in business speaking.

Perhaps the most warranted conclusion that emerges from the varied findings is that some self-concept change apparently takes place in some students in communication courses (Judd and Smith, 1977, p. 289; citing Judd, 1973).

Newburger (1982b) investigated the sources of the inconsistencies in previous SSCMCC research findings and concluded that several conceptual and operational problems require attention. First, SSCMCC literature exhibits a lack of conceptual or operational uniformity in the study of "change in self-concept." Such constructs have been studied as: self-concept (Furr, 1970; Judd and Smith, 1974; Judd and Smith, 1977), self-concept as a communicator (Miyamoto, Crowell, and Katcher, 1956; Brooks and Platz, 1968; Brooks and Jandt, 1971), ideal self-concept (Judd and Smith, 1974; Judd and Smith, 1977), personality change (Moore, 1935; Rose, 1940), personality development and adjustment (Pasco and Lillywhite, 1951), attitudes (Knower, 1938; Gilkinson, 1941), and self-confidence (McCroskey, 1967). Additionally, clear constitutive definitions of the "self" constructs examined are absent in SSCMCC literature. The testing of vaguely defined or undefined terms characterizes both SSCMCC and general "self" studies (Newburger, 1982a, pp. 11-12). Concerning general "self" research, Marsh and Smith suggested that definitions of self-concept are frequently non-existent, imprecise or contradictory (p. 430). Hansford and Hattie (1982) added that some self-concept studies use the same self-concept term (e.g., self-acceptance) but define or operationalize it in different ways (pp. 123, 132).

Roughly, twelve articles directly associated with SSCMCC research were published between 1935 and 1985 (Moore, 1935; Knower, 1938; Rose, 1940; Gilkinson, 1941; Pasco and Lillywhite, 1951; Miyamoto, Crowell and Katcher, 1956; McCroskey, 1967; Brooks and Platz, 1968; Furr, 1970; Brooks and Jandt, 1971; Judd and Smith, 1974; Judd and Smith, 1977). In other words, since 1935, an average of one SSCMCC article has appeared roughly every four years. Considering the potential impact of self-concept on communication ability, the small number of SSCMCC articles indicates that the heuristic potential of this area has not been realized. Although the number of SSCMCC articles is scanty, the diverse ways in which the dependent variable "self-concept change" has been measured is pronounced. Judd (1973) suggested that in practice the majority of SSCMCC researchers have measured different variables (perhaps different dimensions of self) with varied instruments assumed to have been interchangeable (p. 51). This type of inconsistent instrumentation characterizes general "self" studies, as well. Hansford and Hattie indicated that in the 128 "self" studies they reviewed, 58 different instruments relating to the dependent variable were used (p. 134). They indicated that many researchers preferred to develop their own tests or radically modify existing tests (p. 135). By comparison, in the 12 SSCMCC studies 15 different instruments were used to measure the dependent variable, eight of which appeared to be "home-made" (tests specifically constructed for a study by an author), with one "home-made" instrument being a modification of another "home-made" instrument. Judd concluded that SSCMCC researchers should develop from the broad area of self-theory those

measures of self-concept which are most relevant to the communication dimension of the construct (p. 51).

Newburger (1982b) suggested that future SSCMCC research should emphasize construct validity. Communication researchers wishing to generalize from the findings of one study to another must be concerned that the instruments used in the two studies overlap each other as well as the construct under investigation. Similarity scales and generalizability of findings cannot be assumed but must be demonstrated with high correlation coefficients. Additionally, the identificiation of a pool of highly correlated scales to be used in future SSCMCC research is a practical necessity if a true "area" of generalizable findings is to be developed. Finally, Newburger suggested that future SSCMCC research should also consider the assessment of specific self-concept enhancement strategies that build better communicators.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the personality constructs of self-concept and communication apprehension (CA) and the use of self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches) as a potential self-concept enhancement strategy. The question of whether the constructs of self-concept and CA overlap each other was examined for both theoretical and empirical support, and both constructs were, additionally, related to the intervening self-confrontation variable.

Self-concept has long been viewed as a personality variable. Byrne (1974), for example, described self-concept (how a person perceives and evaluates himself) as one of the varied kinds of personality dimensions (i.e., authoritarianism, intelligence, manifest anxiety, need for achievement, etc.), and suggested that to persons studying personality holding to

the conviction that man should be dealt with as an organized whole rather than in terms of his atomistic units (i.e., authoritarianism, need for achievement), the notion of self-concept emerges as useful. He concluded that self-concept is an important aspect of personality (p. 271). Additionally, many educators have recognized the relationship of self-concept and personality. For example, Rogers (1951) proposed a theory of personality development, personality functioning, and personality change with the concept of self as its central focus, and Sullivan (1964) suggested that the personality is, in part, a self-system. Brooks (1978) used the terms "self-concept" and "personality" synonomously, suggesting that "to understand one's self, one must observe that there are several facets to one's personality, several different selves" (p. 47).

Speech and self-concept or personality are believed to be integrally related. Sapir (1927) suggested that speech communication is intuitively interpreted by normal human beings as an index of personality expression. Murray (1937) suggested that speech and personality grow, develop, differentiate, and become refined together; speech being a phase of personality (p. 8). Gilkinson and Knower (1941) stressed that "although teachers differ in regard to their treatment of personality problems in speech, few would minimize the causative importance of emotional attitudes in determining a speaker's effectiveness" (pp. 161-162). They suggested that "the speaker's rapport with his audience and, therefore, his general effectiveness are determined in large measure by both his attitudes toward his audience and his self-attitudes. Moreover, his overt mannerisms,

including such characteristics as vocal quality, rate of speech, posture, diction, fluency, etc., are regarded as symptoms of degrees of internal emotional organization or disorganization" (p. 161). More recently, Brooks (1978) stressed that personal and social growth are two of the major objectives of the study of communication because communication and personality are refined together (p. 5).

Communication apprehension, "an individual's fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey and Beatty, 1984, p. 79; citing McCroskey, 1977, 1978, 1982b), has also been viewed as a personality variable. The construct has been described as a broad-based personality-type characteristic (McCroskey, 1970). McCroskey, Daly and Sorensen (1976) further suggested that CA "may not represent a single, unique personality variable but rather may be related to a number of previous isolated dimensions of personality" (p. 376). One of these personality dimensions could be self-concept. Shavelson and Bolus (1982) concluded that self-concept is a multifaceted construct that is hierarchical in nature. They suggested that general self-construct comprises the apex of the hierarchy and situation specific (e.g., "how I behave as a speaker") self-concepts comprise the base (p. 16). The situation specific quality of CA (fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication events) might represent operation from the self-concept dimension pertaining to communication ability.

The introduction of self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches) as an intervening variable intended to enhance students' self-concepts was based on its potential for providing students with

intensive visual feedback. The potential for this feedback to be positively reinforcing relates to "esteem-building" (Roberts, 1972) and/or self-concept enhancement. As might be expected, self-confrontation could also produce the opposite effect by providing negative reinforcement. There are data supporting both outcomes (Gelso, 1974; Roberts; Dieker, Crane, and Brown, 1971; and McCroskey and Lashbrook, 1970).

METHOD

Data Collection

Data were collected from two samples. In one sample 112 undergraduates enrolled in speech fundamentals classes completed the Tennessee Self-concept Scale (TSCS) developed by Fitts (1965), the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA) developed by McCroskey (1970), and the Video-Confrontation Scale (VCS) developed by Daniel (1983). The subjects completed the three instruments at the beginning of a semester, and, again, at the end of the semester. The first completion of the instruments preceded any in-class public speaking activities, while the second completion of the instruments came after each subject delivered four in-class public speeches. The other sample involved 56 undergraduates also enrolled in speech fundamentals classes who completed the same three instruments at the beginning and end of a semester. The first completion of the instruments preceded any in-class public speaking activities, while the second completion of the instruments came after

each subject delivered four in-class public speeches which were recorded on video cassette. Each subject was confronted with the video playback of each of his/her four public speaking performances following each speech presentation.*

Instruments

Wylie described the TSCS as one of the more frequently used self-regard instruments. The TSCS provides fifteen categories into which self-concept is divided, as well as the Total Positive Score which represents a synthesis of total self-concept. Fitts (1965) reported high test-retest reliability for the Total Positive Score and various subscores. Bentler (1972) reported that the retest reliability for the TSCS, while varying for different scores, was high, sufficient to warrant confidence in difference measurement (p. 366). He also claimed that the scale has construct validity, finding the TSCS to be successful in aiding group discrimination and a capable instrument for measuring self-concept variables (p. 369).

Parks (1980) described the PRCA as the most popular and frequently used measure of communication apprehension (p. 220). The PRCA is a Likert-type, self-report measure that has been found to be highly reliable (McCroskey, 1970, 1975). The instrument has shown indications of both concurrent and predictive validity (McCroskey, 1975), as well. The version of the PRCA used in this study was selected because of its concentration on public speaking, rather than McCroskey's revised version that includes meeting, group, and dyadic items (not judged to be relevant to this study).

The VCS was developed by Daniel (1983) to assess students' reactions to the prospect of being videotaped during their public speaking performances in speech fundamentals classes. The scale consists of three questions

* See Addendum

with five response choices and a seven-item semantic differential scale. Daniel (1984) found the scale to be highly reliable.

Data Analyses

A 2X2 (two levels [with self-confrontation and without self-confrontation] by two trials [pretest and posttest for PRCA, VCS, and TSCS]) MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) was computed. Reliability coefficients for the PRCA, VCS, and TSCS were computed using Cronbach's Alpha. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed for the PRCA and TSCS; PRCA and VCS; and TSCS and VCS. The relationship between demographic variables (sex, age, educational classification [freshman, sophomore, etc.] , grade expectation [reported by subjects on both pre and posttests and later coded as constant, increased or decreased expectation] , teacher evaluation [each subject responded to the same posttest teacher evaluation item--" Overall, this teacher is among the best teachers I have known"--by selecting one of five response choices ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"], and section) and the dependent variables "PRCA change," "VCS change," and "TSCS change" was measured by computing three stepwise multiple linear regression analyses (one analysis for each test).

RESULTS

The MANOVA yielded no significant interaction between self-confrontation and pre and posttests, with an F value of .713 and PR > F equal to .521. The assessment of the main effect of all subjects as differentiated by only self-confrontation was also not significant, with an F value of .924 and PR > F equal to .431. The assessment of the main effect of all subjects as differentiated by only pre and posttests was significant, however, with an F value of 5.11 and PR > F equal to .002.

A post hoc univariate analysis of variance was computed and showed that pre and posttest for the PRCA were responsible for the significant finding above, with an F value of 12.84 and PR > F equal to .000. The F values for the VCS and TSCS, respectively, were only .422 and .606 with corresponding PR > F equal to .517 and .438.

*** Additionally, to satisfy experimenter curiosity, t values were computed and showed that the scores of the subjects not involved with self-confrontation (n=112) changed significantly from pre to posttest for the PRCA, with a t value of 3.59, significant at .000. The change reflected decreased communication apprehension with a pretest mean of 78.61 and posttest mean of 74.34. No other t values for the PRCA (n=56), VCS (n=112, n=56), and TSCS (n=112, n=56) pre and posttest scores were close to being significant. Interestingly, for subjects involved with self-confrontation (n=56), the change in PRCA scores from pretest to posttest, although statistically insignificant (t=1.10, 2-Tail probability=.278), was

*** See Addendum

much greater than the change in scores from pretest to posttest for the other instruments (VCS t value=.12, 2-Tail probability=.901; TSCS t value=-.60, 2-Tail probability=.548). Again PRCA scores reflected decreased communication apprehension with a pretest mean of 77.6 and posttest mean of 76.04.

The average alpha reliability coefficients for the instruments were: for the PRCA alpha=.910; for the VCS alpha=.930; and for the Total Positive Score of the TSCS alpha=.611.

The instruments used in this study did not correlate well with each other. Only 1% (r=.1045, r^2 =1%) of the variation in PRCA pre to posttest change scores, for example, could be attributed to variation in TSCS pre to posttest change scores. Similarly, only about 5% (r=.2211) of the variation in PRCA pre to posttest change scores could be attributed to variation in VCS pre to posttest change scores. Finally, only .002% (r=.0449) of the variation in TSCS pre to posttest change scores could be attributed to variation in VCS pre to posttest change scores.

The results of the regression analyses indicated that the proportion of the criterion variance that was accounted for by the independent predictor variables (demographics) was small for each of the three instruments (PRCA R^2 = .0987 or 10%--all variables entered; VCS R^2 =.0434 or 4%--all variables entered; TSCS R^2 = .05065 or 5%--all variables entered).

DISCUSSION

The PRCA may be a desirable measure of the dimenison of self-concept which is most relevant to communication. An obvious conclusion based on

the correlation coefficients reported in this study is that the instruments used did not overlap each other. Additionally, they simply may not overlap a common construct. The PRCA appears, for example, to measure a communication dimension of self-concept (CA), while the TSCS appears to basically measure the globular self-concept. The VCS may be regarded as a measure of yet another dimension of "self" (i.e., "self-confrontation apprehension").

The results indicated that future SSCMCC research may benefit from a reexamination of the construct under consideration. Perhaps the early conclusion of Miyamoto, Crowell, and Katcher (1956) that self-conceptions reflect a fairly stable phenomenon that should not be expected to change greatly due to contact with any single academic course, should be regarded as support for a view of self-concept as a "traitlike" variable. McCroskey (1982b) suggested that a "traitlike" personality variable is relatively enduring across a wide variety of contexts (p. 147). In the theoretical sense, self-concept is actually viewed as a "state" variable, dynamic in nature. The possibility exists, however, that the globular self-concept may be resistent to change in the limited communication course context. Perhaps a dimension of self-concept that is susceptible to change in the communication course setting is communication apprehension. CA, however, is often viewed as a "trait," but as Beatty, Behnke, and McCallum (1978) pointed out the introduction of a major intervening variable could alter its level. The F values, and, even more importantly, the t values reported in this study

demonstrate that public speaking can act as such an intervening variable (while self-confrontation, as measured in this study, cannot). Future SSCMCC research should consider whether course activities other than public speaking (i.e., group discussion) can also act as major intervening variables capable of reducing communication apprehension.

Another conclusion based on the t values reported in this study is that self-confrontation might inhibit the reduction of communication apprehension leading to improvement in communication skill. The t values support the notion that public speaking, not public speaking followed by self-confrontation, was the enhancing phenomenon present in this study.

Finally, although the demographic variables measured accounted for little of the criterion variance for each of the three instruments used in this study, further consideration of these variables would seem to allow for a checking out of all possible explanations for variance. As Newburger (1982a, 1982b) reviewed, these variables do account for criterion variance in some populations.

ADDENDUM

* Because all subjects responded to three instruments order control was used, where the students of each section were divided into two evenly sized groups and the instruments were administered in counter-balanced order in the groups.

*** The following information represents part of a current revision of this study involving collaboration between Craig Newburger and Linda Brannon (McNeese State University).

Analysis of Covariance

An ANCOVA was performed for subjects' PRCA, VCS, and TSCS scores, measuring the difference between subjects involved with self-confrontation and subjects not involved with self-confrontation on posttest scores, arithmetically adjusting for the pretest scores. None of these analyses revealed a significant difference between the self-confrontation and no self-confrontation groups on the posttest scores, indicating that experiencing self-confrontation does not improve (or worsen) any of the dependent variables.

Newman-Keuls

A layered post hoc analysis using the Newman-Keuls procedure indicated a significant difference for PRCA pre to posttest scores for only the subjects not involved with self-confrontation. No other significant differences were found. This analysis substantiates the ANCOVA and MANOVA results (reported earlier), suggesting no difference attributable to the self-confrontation variable, but a significant difference attributable to the experience of public speaking, as measured by the PRCA.

ANCOVA

PRCA

$F(1,165) = 2.00$, $p > .05$

VCS

$F(1,165) = 2.44$, $p > .05$

TSCS

$F(1,165) = .25$ $p > .05$

Newman-Keuls post hoc

No self-confrontation pre vs. no self-confrontation post

4.3 w/critical value = 4.17 $p < .01$

No self-confrontation pre vs. self confrontation post

2.6 w/critical value = 3.11 $p > .05$

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